

To the House Committee on Rules
Barbara Smith Warner, Chair
Christine Drazen, Vice Chair

Testimony Strongly Opposed to SB 554 – A

“For every complex problem there is an answer that is clear, simple, and wrong.” - H. L. Mencken

I support firearm regulation that is reasonable, well thought out and is designed to effectively address the problem of violence in our society. I also do not believe that firearm regulation is not the best way to solve the issue of violence in our state and country. This has been a problem most of my life and the same old, tired and unsuccessful methods are pulled out to solve it. I have read and considered the text of SB 544 and proposed Amendments. I am strongly opposed to this legislation (SB 554-A) for the following reasons:

1) This measure gives up State Control of the regulatory environment by allowing non-elected representatives in myriad of localities enact and enforce circumstances that have the potential to make criminals and possibly felons out of law abiding citizens by policy and rules. Policy and rules can be, and frequently are, imposed without “due process”. The results could easily result in disrupting citizens financial well being and removing their liberty interests, with no intent to violate laws. Would you allow every civic entity issue Driver’s Licenses with the ability for any employee at any level to make a policy or rule to govern the “Rules of the Road” without due process?

2) This measure would punish these law abiding citizens without addressing the behavior of intentional and consistent law violators. Concealed Handgun License Holders are Law Abiding and Responsible Citizens who have complied with both State and Federal Laws to obtain their license. This involves regular background check and fingerprinting at time of firearm purchase and a more extensive background investigation and full fingerprinting at time of CHL Application. Also, CHL Holders have met State Guidelines in having participated in Safe Firearms practices. This is evidence that CHL Holders overwhelmingly conform their behavior with the law.

3) It forces law abiding citizens with CHL’s into a “double bind” when they have to expose their concealed firearms to public view when de-holstering and re-holstering in a public parking lot or structure in compliance with this law. It also puts the public in danger by forcing unnecessary handling and manipulation of the firearms to unload and lock, then unlock and reload the firearm in a public parking lot or structure by increasing chances of accidental discharge.

While I believe this is a well-intentioned proposed law, this is not a law that will honor the intentions behind it. This law would proscribe the freedoms of law respecting citizens without addressing conduct that is unlawful and harmful. It is not a useful piece of legislation. This bill does not show the the level of effort to address the complexities it purports to solve. It could fill courts, jails and prisons. I cannot support representatives that keep supporting ineffectual legislation then saying they have done something to solve the problem. From the volume of testimony entered prior to mine, a whole lot of other citizens you work for would agree.

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